



The IDAHO FIDDLER

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Members of District 2 are sharing the love of old-time fiddle music by passing on the old tunes and fiddle-playing craft. Pictured here, from left, Fran Widener, fiddle instructor with students Ann Cook, Rachell Hamell, Leland Seggman, Dustin Rinker and Kathreen Steiner. Helping out with accompanying duties is District 2 Chairman Gary Solberg.

District 2

Old-time fiddle tunes and style needs to be passed on

I would like to let all of you know about the passing of a couple old timers who played music with our group many times over the years. Joyce tells me that Dale Hazelbaker passed away April 8. Dale was a brother to Ray Hazelbaker, and played old-time music with the District 2 IOTFA Fiddlers whenever he could. Dale also played with the Banana Belt Fiddlers in Lewiston and the Prairie Fiddlers on the Camas Prairie over the years. For our District Two folks who knew him, a memorial service for Dale Hazelbaker will be held June 30 at 11 a.m. at the River City Church in Lewiston.

Inez Altman also gives me word that Fred Marsh of Bruneau passed away this past December. A farmer and guitar player for many years in

the Grandview area and also in Oregon, Fred often played with our IOTFA fiddlers at the yearly state jams over the years and was well acquainted with many of our past old-time fiddlers.

I take a lot of pride in the tasks that our current IOTFA fiddlers regularly complete each week in spite of the long separation distances in our District, the limited numbers of fiddle players and backups, and the ever-present variables of age, health and gas prices. Max, Duane, Helen, Joyce, Bob and Marian, and Netta and Francis all faithfully keep up regular plays each week in the entire Camas Prairie area. And on the Riggins end, Fran holds regular teaching sessions for fiddle students almost every week, which I try to assist as I

can. There are nearly as many student and junior players in District Two now as regular players. The student fiddlers range from beginners to the more advanced levels of learning. Their emerging new fiddling abilities already help us with our local plays for shut-ins.

Times have really changed, I guess. The transfer of our old-time fiddle music and old-time playing styles really cannot happen now unless we intentionally make direct contacts between the older and younger fiddling generations (and do it before the older generation passes on!). I am finding that this means making the effort and devoting whatever time it takes for the older generation to teach the old tunes and fiddling crafts to those few of the upcoming younger generations who have the ability and the willingness to learn old-time fiddle playing.

Seems to me that if we don't make the effort to pass on the fiddle-playing craft and the old tunes to the next generation, we forego our own debt to those who passed it to us.

-GMS



June 13 - Emmett Cherry Festival performance on Wednesday, June 13 from 3:30-5 p.m. Everyone is invited to join us.

